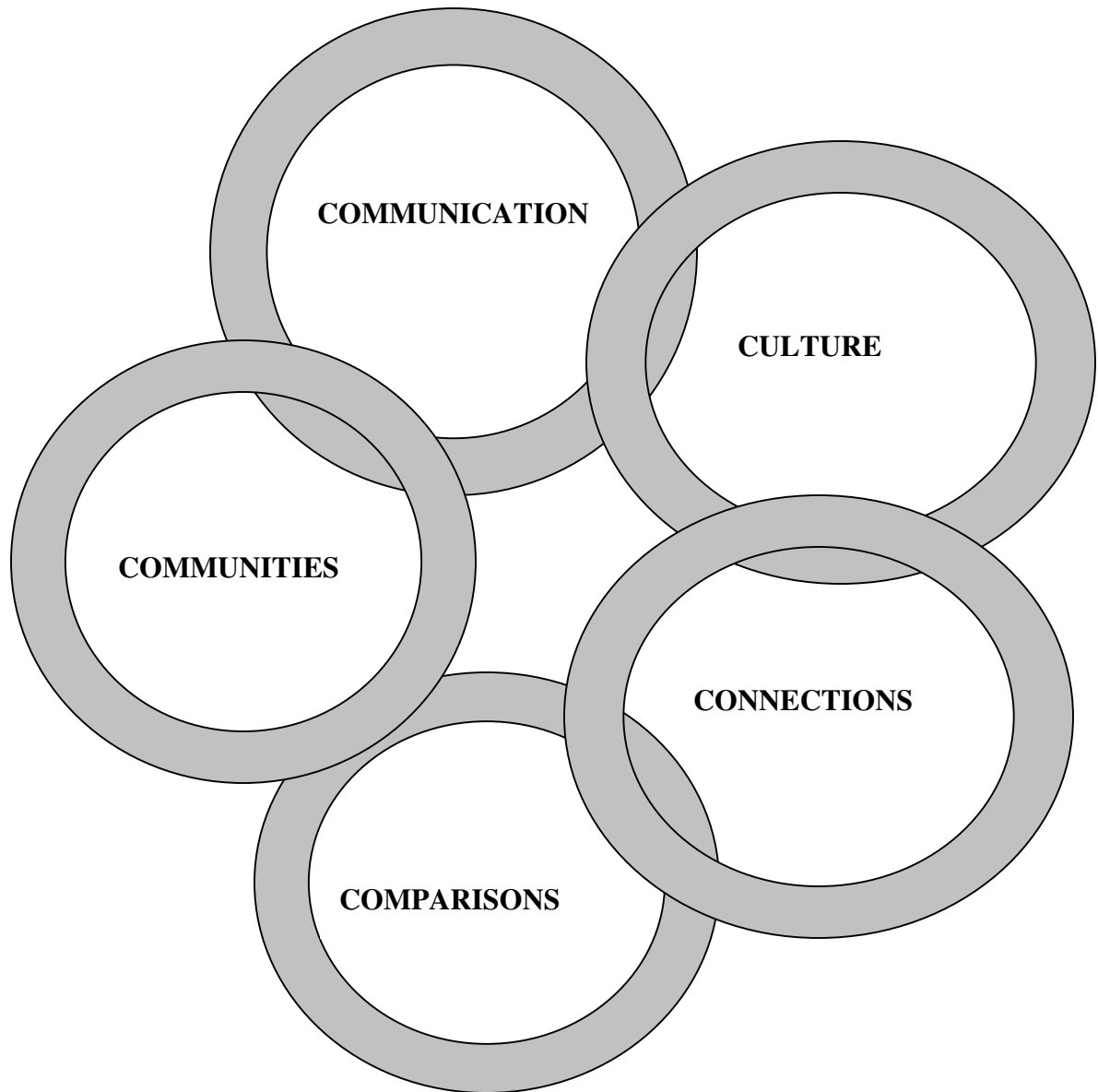


**MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE BENCHMARKS  
GRADES 6-12**





## MELROSE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

### Mission and Objectives

Melrose Foreign Language Department seeks to promote linguistic and cultural literacy while cultivating a love of and enthusiasm for the target language.

We believe the following to be true:

1. All students can learn and experience success in a foreign language
2. The principal goal of foreign language study should be real-life communication
3. Learning a second language provides the vision and skills necessary to be a global citizen
4. Foreign language education can positively impact students' cognitive and emotional growth
5. A second language skill prepares the student to meet the ever-present demands of an interdependent world community
6. Foreign language should be a part of the core curriculum.

Students familiar with customs and history of foreign countries gain a broader, more diversified perspective with regard to the world in which we live. Global perspective is best established through the learning of a language in the way in which it connects us with everyone around us, fostering better communication and understanding. The development of linguistic proficiency empowers students to embrace the world in a larger context; while the development of cultural literacy fosters respect for differences by guiding students to see the world, not as a place confined by differences, but as an open society defined by its unique citizens.

Students will be challenged to develop their proficiency in language in an interactive environment that emphasizes both oral and written expression. This environment will be wide-ranging in its linguistic and cultural spectrum, incorporating a number of literary texts, cultural practices, and daily life themes. Students will sequentially progress in their skills of listening, understanding, speaking, reading, and writing, within the context of everyday real-life situations and authentic texts. Through the use of a variety of resources and methodologies, students will see that language has many voices in its different expressions, and in its many authors. Proficiency will be further refined and developed by offering students contact with local and international language communities, including opportunities to travel and study abroad. The detailed study of fundamentals of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary teaches students to think critically, thereby training them to be more conscientious about the structure of their own English language. Thus, the study of a world language is an interdisciplinary pursuit that inherently compels students to consider their own language and culture in a new light as well as make connections with other disciplines. Students will develop a capacity to understand and interact with the world more completely, both as adolescents and as adults. As members of a global community, they will be able to contribute to the promotion of communication and multicultural understanding.

(continued)

The Melrose Public Schools Foreign Language curriculum emphasizes proficiency. The goal is to strengthen students' listening, understanding, speaking, reading and writing skills. To this end:

- Instructors use the target language whenever possible and encourage students to do the same
- Activities reflect real-life situations and vary in nature to accommodate multiple learning styles
- Culture is incorporated into the daily delivery of the lesson
- Activities are student-centered
- Teachers enable students to be successful at all levels and abilities
- Teachers ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all students
- Students are encouraged to develop their potential and skills through the use of print and non-print material
- Assessments reflect and inform instruction.

Besides daily instruction, in order to help students achieve optimum success in foreign language studies, the Melrose Foreign Language department offers many opportunities:

- Native guest speakers in individual classrooms
- Amity scholars who spend a year in the classroom as native-speaking interns (when funding is available)
- Foreign Language National Exams
- National foreign language honor society memberships
- Biennial exchanges with Germany and Italy
- Guided cultural tours of Italy, Spain, France, Quebec
- A fully computerized language laboratory
- French, German, Italian, Latin and Spanish Clubs
- Museum, theater and restaurant excursions.

**\*This document was authored by the cooperative efforts and hard work of the Melrose Public Schools Foreign Language Department from 2003-2005.**

Patricia Muxie, Director of Curriculum  
February, 2005

## STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

*Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. Students who come to school from non-English backgrounds should also have opportunities to develop further proficiencies in their first language.*

### STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

#### **COMMUNICATION: *Communicate in Languages Other Than English***

**Standard 1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

**Standard 2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

**Standard 3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

#### **CULTURES: *Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures***

**Standard 4:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices, products, and perspectives of the culture studied.

#### **COMPARISONS: *Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture***

**Standard 5:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

**Standard 6:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

#### **CONNECTIONS: *Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information***

##### **Standard 7:**

A) Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

B) Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its culture.

#### **COMMUNITIES: *Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World***

**Standard 8:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting. This includes, a) showing evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment, and b) having classical language students able to recognize and identify elements of classical languages and ancient cultures in the world around them.

**Standards above are from the Massachusetts Foreign Language Curriculum Frameworks, August 1999. State standards parallel the federally-funded *National Standards for Foreign Language Learning*.**

*A note about Latin:* As a classical language, the Latin curriculum requires continuous reasoning and analytic thinking. *The main focus of instruction is composition and translation.* Classical study also includes, however, the study of historical and cultural matters, providing the basis for comparing, contrasting, and understanding patterns of sociocultural behavior and change.

# World Culture (Grade 6)

Note: This course is not currently taught each year.

## Communication

- Explore different forms of communication (e.g., *body language, signs, symbols*)
- Learn a variety of languages used for communication with a focus on basic social phrases

## Culture

- Discuss the geography and populations of different cultures
- Study the maps of:
  - Western Europe
  - Central America
  - South Americaand be able to identify their features and location
- Identify at least four countries that speak Spanish
- Recognize the flags from the above countries
- Listen to and identify the national anthems of Germany, Italy, Spain, and France

## Comparisons

- Gain an understanding of and be able to compare: Morse Code, Braille, the International Alphabet and American Sign Language
- Identify the origins of selected words (e.g., *pardon, a la carte, salsa, café*) in modern world languages
- Examine Latin words and identify their connection to English, French, Italian, Spanish, and German counterparts
- Learn common suffixes/prefixes and word similarities in various languages
- Compare weather temperatures in Fahrenheit and Celsius

## Connections

- Discuss how language can create and break down barriers
- Use prior knowledge of English to build vocabulary
- Identify the country of origin for international currency
- Be able to translate standard to metric units when working with weights and measures

## Communities

- Recognize and state the advantages of learning another language
  - Discuss professions which require the knowledge of a second language
  - Explain the economic impact of a global market on the quality of life
- Seek out, converse with, and report on several people in the community that speak a language other than English
- Identify daily products (at the supermarket) that use names derived from another language
- Organize an international festival with food/music/artwork from various countries

## **Foreign Language Exploratory (Grade 6)**

**\*In this course, students study each of the following languages for one quarter: French, Spanish, German, and Italian. The benchmarks below are repeated for each language. At the conclusion of the exploratory year, students decide which language they will continue to study.**

### **Communication**

- Exchange social greetings and say goodbye
- Ask someone their name and respond
- Ask someone how they are and provide a variety of responses
- Ask someone their age and respond
- Count to at least 30 and give one's telephone number in the target language
- Know the alphabet and be able to spell one's name using the target language
- Say the months and days of the week in the target language
- Recognize basic classroom vocabulary
- Know basic colors in the target language
- Use general courtesy words

### **Culture**

- Identify countries where French, German, Italian and Spanish are spoken
- Know the basic geography of the country of the target language
- Recognize the capital and one other city in each country
- Name at least one major historical figure from each country and be able to state his/her contribution

### **Comparisons**

- Recognize cognates between English vocabulary and basic French, German, Italian and Spanish vocabulary with same root (e.g., luna/lunatic)
- Become aware of the similarity between romance languages (e.g., one, uno, uno)

### **Connections**

- Learn skills and methods that help with the study of a second language (e.g., mnemonic organization/memorization/flashcards/repetition/voice recording etc.)
- Be able to give examples of the influence of different cultures on American life

### **Communities**

- Seek out and identify examples of linguistic diversity within our own community

## Foreign Language: Stage I

Note: This stage includes both Middle and High School students.

### Communication

Use the target language to:

- Give and receive personal biographical information
- Provide information about family and friends
- Express basic likes and dislikes
- Use vocabulary related to satisfying the basic human needs of hunger, thirst, and well-being
- Follow and give simple directions
- Use basic vocabulary related to the following topics:
  - school and classroom objects
  - weather and seasons
  - vacation choices and leisure activities
  - telling time
  - colors
  - clothing
  - foods and beverages
  - house
  - people
  - clothing
- Identify, use, and manipulate numbers 0-1,000
- Create simple dialogues in the target language
- Read simple sentences, instructions, and paragraphs in the target language
- Speak simple phrases and sentences in the target language
- Respond to simple questions in the target language
- Identify and use the structural elements of a sentence necessary to accomplish all of the above

### Culture

- Demonstrate knowledge of the geography of target countries by identifying:
  - major bodies of water
  - mountain chains
  - major cities
  - international landmarks
- Use appropriate gestures to accompany communication
- Practice and master basic courtesies and greetings in the target language
- Recognize major holidays and celebrations of another country

### Comparisons

- Be aware of cultural differences between other countries and the United States, appreciating the diversity of human behavior and/or lifestyle
- Identify similarities and differences between the target culture and the native culture in:
  - home life
  - family
  - daily routine of a teenager in another country
  - hobbies
- Compare the educational systems of one or more cultures with our own

### Connections

- Make comparisons between the target language and English (e.g., cognates/false-cognates/word-roots/suffixes/prefixes)
- Research and report on math, history, art, and music in the target culture

### Communities

- Experience an introduction to foreign films in the target culture
- Identify multicultural celebrations which typically take place in the Boston area and/or Massachusetts

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading and writing include: physical characteristics, family, friends, school, clothing, the city, hobbies, sports, weather, time, numbers, colors, nature, the calendar, food and beverages, daily routines, geographical terms, the house, and shopping.*

## Foreign Language: Stage II

### Communication

Use the target language to:

- Name subjects, equipment, activities, places and people related to the school setting
- Discuss extracurricular activities
- Discuss one's daily routine (e.g., personal hygiene, before/after school activities)
- Identify musical instruments
- Discuss clothing in detail (e.g., colors/materials/sizes/patterns)
- Role-play shopping
- Role-play paying for a purchase
- Discuss and describe sports and sports equipment
- Name and describe family pets and animals
- Discuss leisure activities such as music, games, and hobbies
- Discuss family celebrations and holidays
- Name personal possessions
- Name home furnishings and appliances
- Recognize and identify places within a community
- Give and receive basic directions
- Express activities in the present and past tense
- Express activities in the future tense
- Recall one's childhood and discuss it
- Identify and use the structural elements of a sentence necessary to accomplish all of the above

### Culture

- Identify major monuments in the target country
- Recognize major cultural figures from countries where the target language is spoken
- Recognize the basic history of the foreign country being studied

### Comparisons

Compare and contrast:

- American teen daily life with the daily life in at least one other country
- American schools and the school system of the target country
- American vs. International celebrations

### Connections

- Be able to relate new vocabulary and grammatical structures to previously learned words and patterns
- Understand a foreign currency and its cultural and historic background

### Communities

- Attend events that involve the use of the target language (e.g., movies, concerts)
- Identify businesses in the community that require proficiency in the target language

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading, and writing include: school subjects, the school system, extracurricular and daily activities, musical instruments, shopping, clothing and fashion, work, transportation, money and currency, historical figures, holidays and celebrations, the city and community, childhood memories, dining out, home furnishings and appliances, nature, professions, radio, television, and the cinema.*

## Foreign Language : Stage III

### Communication

Use the target language to:

- Acquire goods, services and/or information in written or oral form
- Give and receive information about travel needs
- Discuss various means of transportation
- Order food and beverages
- Talk about nationality and language
- Describe the personality as well as the physical characteristics of people
- Indicate quantities
- Express greetings for appropriate congratulatory occasions
- Write a simple note/letter/post card
- Make statements requiring the use of the present, past, future and conditional tense
- Keep a journal with entries of one or two paragraphs
- Give both familiar and polite commands
- Recognize and state common idiomatic expressions
- Express feelings in depth
- Create situational experiences on a given topic
- Identify and use the structural elements of a sentence necessary to accomplish all of the above

### Culture

- Recognize the political systems and geography of the target culture(s)
- Understand the governmental structure of at least one country
- Know a basic timeline history of the target country
- Identify and describe important figures in the target culture

### Comparisons

- Compare and contrast the government of the United States with the target country
- Read and understand a foreign newspaper article and be able to differentiate how a particular situation is interpreted by various people

### Connections

- Recognize the relationship between cultural practices and the history of a country
- Study immigration patterns from countries where the target language is spoken
- Identify important figures in American life who have ethnic backgrounds and have influenced American life

### Communities

- Understand the cultural/political/economic relationship between the target country and the USA
- Explain the impact of people and events as they relate to the development of the United States
- View and interpret TV, movies, and performances from the target country in light of how they reflect community and culture

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading, and writing include: social relationships, stereotypes, the environment, travel, careers, history, geography, government, politics, emotions, quantity and distance, symbols, and signs.*

## Foreign Language: Stage IV A

### Communication

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate comprehension of the general idea(s) presented in the target language on a variety of topics
- Read, interpret, and analyze a variety of authentic materials such as:
  - short stories by various authors
  - poetry
- Ask an analytical question about a literary work
- Relate the storyline of a work both orally and in writing
- Express complex thoughts using compound sentences, syntax, and appropriate linking words
- Integrate previously learned grammatical structures at an advanced intermediate level
- Express doubt
- Discuss a hypothetical situation
- Express a desire, wish, or opinion
- Organize and write an essay involving a set of instructions

### Culture

- Demonstrate an awareness of human similarities and differences
- Role play different aspects of native culture versus the target culture
- Use and interpret various media in the target language:
  - movies
  - music
  - newspapers
  - Internet sites
- Understand and give examples of stereotyping
- Respond appropriately to social cues

### Comparisons

- Compare and contrast in an analytical way, the cultural perspectives of various people
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### Connections

- Distinguish fundamental information from superficial details
- Make historical and cultural associations from events, both current and past

### Communities

- Watch and understand a foreign film without subtitles. Discuss conclusions about the community it portrays.
- Access information using a variety of community-based resources
- Interact with teens from other countries through travel or e-mail

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading, and writing include: current events, the cinema, literature, social issues, current events, beliefs, the media, technology, historical landmarks, and health.*

## Foreign Language: Stage IV B

### Communication

- Demonstrate comprehension of the target language involving a variety of topics
- Compose a well-developed essay on the following topics:
  - Stereotypes
  - Environmental issues and policies
  - Theater and cinema
  - The visual arts
  - Health Issues
  - Current political and social issues
  - Scientific advances
  - History
  - Belief systems
- Discuss and react to the topics listed above using the target language
- Elaborate on and summarize key ideas using the target language
- Using the target language, compose and present a persuasive argument
- Offer a counter opinion using the target language
- Listen to authentic materials (e.g., theatre/cinema/radio/television) with complete comprehension of theme
- Read and analyze topics in contemporary printed materials
- Read, understand, and interpret selected literature
- Read, understand, and interpret selected poetry
- Express personal beliefs using the target language
- Paraphrase and summarize a plot/background/storyline
- Write a critique of a story/play/literary work
- Compose a poem/fairy tale on a given theme using the target language

### Culture

- Recognize predominant and reoccurring themes in comparative literature such as:
  - the individual pursuit of happiness
  - unfulfilled love
  - perseverance of the human spirit
  - changing moralities in society

### Comparisons

- Compare native folktales, legends, and myths to similar American versions
- Analyze American literary themes in light of the cultural perspectives of 20<sup>th</sup> century writers of Latin-America and Europe

### Connections

- Make connections and discuss, both orally and in writing, global current events
- Recognize the connection of foreign language studies to the major historical figures in fields of:
  - Literature: Shakespeare/ Dante/Cervantes/Moliere
  - History: Hitler/Mussolini/Franco
  - Math: Pythagoras
  - Science: Enrico Fermi/Einstein

(continued)

## **Communities**

- Use the target language both inside and outside the school setting
- Actively participate in multicultural activities held outside the school:
  - trips
  - exhibits
  - competitions and assessments (e.g., National Exams, AP Exams, SAT II)
  - cultural and artistic programs
- Analyze and respond to current events as a reflection of community issues
- Listen to, read, and react to the lyrics of music in the target language

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading, and writing include: stereotypes, expressions of opinion and/or belief, debate, human awareness, government, the environment, the economy, the visual arts, theater, and the cinema.*

# Invitation to Language and Culture (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

\*This course satisfies the High School Foreign Language requirement.

## Communication

- Identify the various uses of language
- Explore a variety of forms of communication (e.g., *body language, signs, symbols*)
- Learn basic social expressions in five different languages
- Conduct introductions in at least three languages

## Culture

- Explore several spoken languages in the world (e.g., Spanish, French, German, Italian)
- Locate regions/countries that speak a target language
- Make a linguistic and cultural study of the following countries: Germany, Italy, Spain and France
- Recognize the national anthem of the above countries
- Recognize and identify international flags
- Recognize how and why languages change and grow (e.g., The new words, “visa,” and “computer” were added as a result of economic growth.)
- Contrast differences in social formalities

## Comparisons

- Recognize various forms of communication such as Morse Code, Braille, the International Alphabet and American Sign Language
- Examine a variety of vocabulary and its connection/relationship to Latin, English, French, Italian, Spanish and German
- Identify the origins of selected English words (e.g., *pardon, a la carte, salsa, café*)
- Learn common suffixes/prefixes and commonalities in various languages

## Connections

- Discuss how language can create and break down barriers (e.g., the invention of *Esperanto*)
- Use knowledge of English to create word families
- Convert the US dollar into international currency
- Be able to translate standard to metric units when working with weights and measures
- Convert temperatures from Fahrenheit to Celsius

## Communities

- Examine and breakdown stereotypes. Give examples of ideas/actions that have had the effect of broadening one’s perspective.
- Organize an international festival with food/music/artwork from various countries
- State reasons which benefit the community for learning another language
- Identify professions which require the knowledge of a second language
- Research languages spoken in one’s city/state/country
- Identify various ethnic groups living in the community and research/report on their customs
- Seek and interview people in the community that speak a foreign language
- Research imported products available in local markets and stores
- Research and identify locally available multi-lingual media (radio/TV/newsprint)

*Sample topics for listening, speaking, reading and writing: geography, symbols, signs, weather, food, customs, professions, consumer products, the media, inventions, gestures within a social context, and currency.*